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JANUARY 2019

AQUATIC COMPLEX: Shrine or Money Pit?
You be the Judge—page 4

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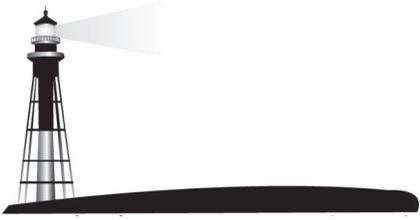
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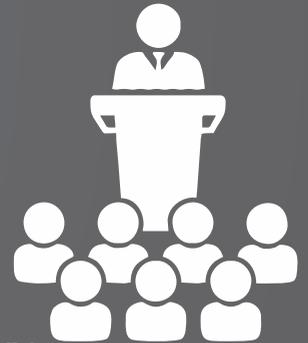
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This past summer, the Fort Lauderdale City Commission rescued the city's Aquatic Complex from oblivion, dampening a heated conflict between supporters and those opposed to investing in a facility that may require endless fiscal life support. The Commission vote ended a series of failed attempts to rehabilitate the complex – a process clouded by findings of bureaucratic corruption and official misconduct.

Birth of a Legacy

Following decades of deterioration and increasing obsolescence, Fort Lauderdale's swimming and diving Mecca is finally being renovated. The City's swimming / diving legacy began in the early 1900s as the Civilian raft moored off the beach at the end of Las Olas Boulevard was replaced in 1928 by the Casino Pool in what later became DC Alexander Park.

The Spanish-style facility built for \$150,000 housed the first Olympic size pool in Florida at 50.38 meters by 18.3 meters (55 yards by 20 yards), and nurtured the 1932 and 1936 Olympic careers of Elbert Root and the iconic Katherine Rawls, who later went on to capture a record 30 national titles in swimming and diving as the City's – and the nation's – athletic ambassador.

Built in 1965 just west of the Casino pool (which closed a year later), the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex featured two 50-meter Olympic-size pools, a diving pool, a teaching pool and a spa. Reinforcing Fort Lauderdale's stature as the nation's swimming and diving capital, the facility was also made home to the International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISHOF).

Until recently, the complex hosted an average of 50 events each year over 100 days, including the Annual College Swim Forum; U.S. National Swimming Championships; YMCA National Swimming & Diving Championships; U.S. Masters National Swimming Championships; NCAA National Water Polo Championships; the FINA/U.S. International Diving Invitational and national and international synchronized swimming competitions.

Olympic medalists who called it home include Mary Ellen Clark and Paige Zemina (Bronze); Elbert Root and Scott Donie (Silver); and Katherine Rawls, Shirley Stobbs, Dave Edgar and Joel Thomas (Gold). This hometown Olympic legacy extended to Jenny Keim, Karen LaFace, Kent Ferguson, Michelle Davison, Jevon Tarantino and renowned coaches such as Dr. Ron O'Brien, Tim O'Brien, Dave Burgering, and Jack Nelson, who had been an Olympic athlete twenty years earlier.

The Bidding Process from Hell

Plans to bring the Glory Days back to the Aquatic Complex were repeatedly derailed. In 2002, a Swim Center improvement plan was quashed by a 3 - 2 vote in the City Commission. A 2009 \$76.2 million renovation plan by Recreational Design and Construction (RDC) which included restaurants, entertainment venues and artificial surf machines also hit the wall. With the collapsing bleachers condemned in 2011, a scaled-back 2012 RDC proposal to rehabilitate the complex for \$32.4 million climbed to \$41 million in 2015, and was scratched.

AQUATIC COMPLEX

Shrine or Money Pit?

By: Eric Berkowitz



The Casino Pool in what later became DC Alexander Park.

No other proposals were elicited for the down-sized project.

The suspicious bidding process was condemned in a July 24, 2013 report issued by the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Entitled "Misconduct by the City of Fort Lauderdale in the Award of the Contract for the Design and Construction of the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex", the report concludes that the City "conducted an inadequate procurement and legal review "process", and details how the city's skewed request for proposal (RFP) sent "mixed signals that dissuaded competitive participation".

In his report, Broward Inspector General John Scott summarizes evidence of statutory violations, exclaiming, "the City Commission was told the contract contained language that was never, in fact, incorporated, and the contract also allocated \$60,027 for unidentified costs. Most significantly, the City agreed to a provision in the contract that shielded \$1.66 million of reimbursable labor costs from audit, despite RDC's history of double-billing the City and maintaining inadequate accounting processes. This exclusion would prevent the City from determining if it was being overbilled for RDC's supervisory and administrative labor costs."

The OIG's reference to an RDC predisposition for double-billing was based on a January 24, 2003 City internal audit disclosing how RDC was overpaid \$89,374.17 that the company had admittedly double-billed to the City for a project in Welcome Park, which the audit attributed to an RDC "practice of charging for the same equipment and personnel as direct reimbursable costs and as part of a "general conditions" multiplier in the task order." Two bills – two payments – same job. Nice work if you can get it.

Milking City Projects

At the time, the City was neck-deep in a hand-to-mouth free-spending culture that ultimately imploded the budget and brought Fort Lauderdale to the brink of bankruptcy. Acting City Manager Alan Silva had crafted a program of financial reforms, service cuts and tax/fee increases designed to ensure that Fort Lauderdale "lives within its means". To help rein in the fiscal flea circus, then Finance Director Terry Sharp sought to track down tens of \$milions in tax dollars doled out without authorization or otherwise unaccounted for. Former City Auditor Allyson Love launched a series of internal audits.

In reviewing RDC design and build contracts for Welcome Park, Civic Peoples Park and other city projects, staff auditor Renee Foley wrote, "we found significant issues of a material nature that jeopardized the City's assets." Unrelenting abuses documented in the audits led to a scandal. Former Assistant City Engineer Peter Sheridan was overseeing the RDC project in Welcome Park when he signed off on a series of bogus payments to the contractor. In addition to being double-tapped for more than \$89,000 – of the \$328,614 paid to RDC for Welcome Park, Foley found that \$110,666.57 (34%) was disbursed for ineligible or unverified expenses.

Two weeks later, on February 6, 2004 Foley released an audit of RDC's construction of Civic Peoples Park (since renamed Dr. Elizabeth Hays Civic Park) in southwest Fort Lauderdale, wherein RDC overbilled the City \$85,000 for project expenditures, direct labor, and multiplier costs. A neighborhood park built between 1999 and 2001 at 3781 SW Riverland Road, it included a walking path, playground equipment, picnic shelter, landscaping and a half dozen parking spots. Foley stated "The City paid RDC \$258,114.48, of which \$110,010.94 (43%) was determined to be questionable costs."

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Continued on page 6

With Sheridan's approval, the City paid RDC extra for items like a portable toilet, which were already included in the main contract. The City also picked up lunch tabs for RDC project manager Scott Greiner. Fort Lauderdale was billed for a slew of items that were unsupported by any documentation – including permit fees and concrete. They reimbursed RDC for undocumented American Express and Home Depot bills. The City also paid RDC for consultant work done before the project was even approved.

In a March 3, 2004 audit of RDC improvements to the Lauderdale Manors Recreation Center, Foley concluded that "RDC overbilled/charged the City \$242,918.70 in vendor expenditure, direct labor, equipment and multiplier costs." When an RDC subcontractor damaged a support wall in 2001, a \$536,540 RDC contract to renovate the center was abandoned when Sheridan approved a change order allowing RDC to demolish the entire structure and rebuild a new Center for \$918,826.

Beating the Rap

Based on Foley's audits, an investigation by Assistant State Attorney John Countryman revealed that RDC had installed an \$11,000 spa in Sheridan's private home in September 2001, roughly coinciding with when he nearly doubled RDC's contract price for the Lauderdale Manors project. The hot tub installation was managed by RDC's Scott Greiner, for whom Sheridan had repeatedly approved RDC payment requests for ineligible expenses and lucrative change orders. With the intensifying investigation threatening to expose the hot tub as a payoff, in a classic "CYA" maneuver – nine months later RDC hand-delivered a bill for the spa to Sheridan's mother.

Countryman said the collusion between Sheridan and RDC spanned years – and more than \$1 million in contracts. Despite a truckload of circumstantial evidence, absent an airtight quid pro quo linking the gift with the rip-offs, Countryman decided to forego prosecution – Sheridan dodged a bullet. While exposing this chronic conflict of interest culminated in Sheridan's departure, RDC continued racking up City contracts, and was only forced to return a miniscule fraction of their fraudulent windfalls.

When Sheridan finally resigned as the media trumpeted Countryman's findings, the City rewarded his misdeeds with a \$60,000 parachute. In an eerie post-script, Sheridan's subsequent transition to the private sector was realized by Keith and Schnars, a Fort Lauderdale consulting firm that does substantial repeat business with the City – and evidently viewed Sheridan's sticky fingers as an asset when they snatched him up. Ten years later, Block's OIG report intimated that former City Attorney Harry Stewart and City Manager Lee Feldman were central to the aquatic complex bidding gaffes, despite that both bureaucrats took their marching orders from the City Commission.

Hail Mary Reprieve

Tucked into the southeast corner of District 2, the aquatic center's prospects dimmed as the sole bidding contractor held fast to its planned windfall. Stunned by the unwavering astronomical price tag, in April 2016 former District 2 Commissioner Dean Trantalis likened repair estimates to "a punch in the gut." Convinced that the renovations couldn't be performed at a price-point sufficiently low to justify rehabilitating a facility running annual losses in excess of \$1 million - returning less than 23 percent of operational expenses - City Commissioners viewed the project as snake-bit and threw in the towel. ISHOF announced relocation plans to Santa Clara, California, where City officials were building a new facility.

Seeking to revive the paralyzed project, Trantalis and City Manager Lee Feldman orchestrated a last-ditch solicitation on November 17, 2017. To enhance the facility's affordability for patrons, Commissioners hoped to land a proposal of less than \$20 million. When Trantalis later took the mayoral reins,

Steve Glassman filled the vacated District 2 Commission seat. However, the project attracted proposals of \$35 million by John Scherer's Gulf Building LLC and \$27 million by bid-winner Hensel Phelps Construction Co.

Although \$7 million more than anticipated, at the July 10, 2018 City Commission meeting, Glassman and Trantalis convinced Commissioners to blind-eye the budget and approve the project. Targeted for completion in 2020, the project was threatened with a trip to the courthouse. As part of a group that – although uninvited – submitted a competing proposal for a new aquatics complex and a hotel built on nearby city land, developer Sherman Whitmore couched a future legal action in his post-meeting comment that the Commission had exposed the City to lawsuits by altering the budget to accept the \$27 million bid. It panned out as bluster.

Explaining that beach development regulations would prohibit construction of the proposed hotel, City Manager Lee Feldman rejected Whitmore's unsolicited proposal. To meet the \$27 million burden, the CRA will cough up \$23.3 million, \$1.7 million will be drawn from the General Fund, \$1.5 million from Park Impact Fees and \$500,000 from the Parking Fund. Then Interim City Attorney Alain Boileau seemed unconcerned by Whitmore's thinly veiled threat, imparting that the negotiations could proceed.

Pyrrhic Victory?

Elated by the vote to salvage the complex, ISHOF CEO Brent Rutemiller remarked "This milestone, along with ISHOF's commitment to sign a 30-year lease to remain in Fort Lauderdale, accomplishes two important goals that ISHOF's Board and the community set out late last year." While many project proponents appear relieved, others expressed disappointment, citing the funding as insufficient for redeveloping a world-class facility.

Before exchanging his CEO hat for that of a consultant in December, former ISHOF boss Bruce Wigo said that without adding new features that attract the public, fixing the pools and grandstand would be a waste of resources, as Broward's dwindling number of swimmers are already using the County's 18 other Olympic size pools. Wigo's trepidations were echoed in a recent letter from the Center's former Olympic swimming coach Tim O'Brien.

With the City's impending immersion in Herculean infrastructure debt, their concern may not resonate with taxpaying residents distracted by water mains exploding like piñatas, and a planned \$1.4 billion fix proposed by the infrastructure task force. In contrast, City Commissioners were primarily focused on winning back the prestigious annual tournaments that underscored the site's historical status as a national shrine.

By finding a middle ground between those opposed to funding the revival of a money pit and those advocating for an additional \$70 million in themed recreational bells and whistles, District 2 Commissioner Steve Glassman precluded the eroding aquatic center's demolition and inevitable rebirth as a stereotypically overpriced glass-balconied condominium. By realizing a balance that eluded his predecessors for decades, Glassman not only delivered for District 2 constituents, but affordably preserved the City's Olympic legacy. Not bad night's work for a rookie Commissioner. •



Inspector General John Scott

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EDITOR'S COMMENTARY:

Heather Moraitis' NOVEMBER 2018 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

**After opening her November 2018 Newsletter with an expression of gratitude appropriate to Thanksgiving, District 1 City Commissioner Heather Moraitis details the City's participation in a collaborative plan to assist the County's homeless population, an effort to provide housing and offer services ranging from healthcare to employment preparation - in an environment that functionally decriminalizes homelessness. The business community, homeless advocates, charitable non-profits and Broward County are all on board with this "Housing First" homeless initiative. Moraitis also welcomes constituents to attend her Pre-Agenda Meetings; reviews upcoming municipal events; announces the City's implementation of a Dockless Mobility plan (fostering the overnight city-wide proliferation of electric scooters) and encourages District 1 volunteers to fill a variety of available municipal Advisory Board positions.*

COMMUNITY COURT PILOT PROGRAM

Commissioner Moraitis' November missive characterizes a "Community Court" as beneficial to the homeless. Funded by a \$200,000 grant from the Center for Court Innovation, and avidly supported by Chief Judge Jack Tuter, Broward's 17th Judicial Circuit will soon implement this unique judicial alternative.

Currently, homeless people arrested for minor municipal code violations are held in lockup prior to arraignment. At a cost of about \$150 per prisoner per day, pre-trial jail warehousing is a ridiculously expensive option for non-violent offenders who committed minor codes infractions.

Shortly after being named chief judge on July 1, 2017, Tuter learned that 321 people were being held on bonds of under \$5,000. The cost to taxpayers of keeping 30 inmates who can't meet a small bond in jail for 30 days is about \$135,000. The annual tax burden of this systemic pitfall approaches a sobering \$18 million.

While miffed about the daunting taxpayer impact, Tuter is primarily concerned about the disparate treatment of minorities and the indigent, observing "If you are in jail more than a couple of days on a low bond, you are probably there because you can't afford to post the bond. People shouldn't be waiting in jail simply because they are poor."

Other factors complicate the issue. Since the court system must notify defendants when they should appear in court (to avoid the need for dispatched deputies to round them up), a viable address is required for pretrial release. That typically eliminates eligibility for homeless persons who would otherwise qualify. To help circumvent this wasteful and inequitable judicial tripping hazard, Tuter assigned a full-time first-appearance judge to focus on pre-trial release and other methods of deterring unnecessary custody.

At a May conference in Birmingham, Alabama, Tuter learned how community courts reduce both recidivism and the use of pre-trial incarceration while enhancing public trust in the justice system. After investigating substantial relevant research, he worked with Fort Lauderdale homeless intervention administrator Jeri Pryor to secure sufficient grant funding to hire a program manager and address other start-up costs.

NEW YORK EXPERIMENT

The first community court opened in 1993 in Midtown Manhattan as a 3-year experiment, and targeted quality-of-life offenses in the Times Square neighborhood - such as prostitution, illegal vending, graffiti, shoplifting, farebeating, and vandalism. Offender sentences often hinge on paying back the community through neighborhood work projects - caring for street trees, erasing graffiti, cleaning subway stations and sorting recycled cans and bottles. The court also links offenders with social services specific to their needs, such as drug treatment, health care, education, child care, etc.

The results were stunning. During the first 18 months, arrests for prostitution in the Midtown neighborhood dropped by 56 percent, arrests for unlicensed vending fell by 24 percent, and graffiti all but disappeared along the adjacent Ninth Avenue commercial corridor, reflecting a visible reduction in criminal activity on the streets. Not surprisingly, staunch approval by the entire community explosively expanded the Midtown Community Court's docket to an average 65 daily cases by 1997, annually arraigining more than 16,000 alleged scofflaws.

Since then, more than thirty community courts have emerged in major cities across the country - often convened in storefronts, libraries, schools and other non-traditional venues. Whether conceived to thin jail overcrowding, relieve chronically cramped dockets, or empower long impotent communities to pro-actively address the causes and conditions of local crimes, these courts leverage input from impact panels of local residents to deliver a form of community-based justice that elevates recovery and restitution above punishment.

Despite adaptations that meet the differing needs of various jurisdictions, the collaborative nature of community courts forges improved relationships between the justice system and local stakeholders - including residents, merchants, service providers and law enforcement.

BROWARD TAKES THE PLUNGE

"There's something wrong with housing people in the jail who have committed minor, non-violent offenses," remarked Chief Judge Jack Tuter. In explaining the new venue, he added "Our court is focused on therapeutic treatment for people charged with non-violent crimes. The idea is to have service providers in the courtroom," enabling homeless people picked up on municipal code violations to go directly to shelters, rehabs, or halfway houses, thereby saving taxpayers a bundle on pre-trial jail warehousing.

Some members of the legal profession oppose any divergence from the traditional courtroom model, holding that anything less than an adversarial Armageddon cheats justice and insults the Constitution, a contention convincingly refuted by the proven success of drug courts. Other skeptics are leery of how community concerns might adulterate sentences. Then again, alternative models also shrink the pool of potentially lucrative client opportunities.

*Tuter has no illusions about the court's limitations with respect to homelessness, exclaiming "It's a societal issue that the county and city will have to wrestle with." Since more than half of the 2,450 individuals living on Broward streets are in the City of Fort Lauderdale, that's where the community court will be convened when it opens for business in January 2019. Read Commissioner Heather Moraitis' November 2018 newsletter elsewhere in this edition. - [editor]**

From the Desk of Commissioner **HEATHER MORAITIS**

Homelessness

The City Commission is committed to helping the 2,300 men, women, and children in Broward County experiencing homelessness. The City has joined the initiative, United We End Homelessness, by partnering with AutoNation, Broward County, the United Way of Broward County, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, and a coalition of business leaders to alleviate the county's homelessness epidemic. The Broward Business Council on Homeless is supporting Broward County's Continuum of Care "Housing First" approach. "Housing First" is a national best practice that focuses on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing, then provides additional support services based on individual needs. The Salvation Army is exploring a day respite program, which will offer a place to gather during the day to provide the much-needed support services. Additional wraparound services will be provided throughout the community to ensure those who need help receive medical, mental health, and social services. The new Landlord Engagement and Assistance Program (LEAP) will provide incentives for landlords with rental housing units in Broward County who rent to residents experiencing homelessness.

Fort Lauderdale is expanding its effort to provide a Comprehensive Homeless Strategy that leverages resources and unifies a collaborative effort to ending homelessness. The City is doing so by initiating a Community Court Pilot Program that directly addresses the City's strategic goals of reducing non-violent crimes, supporting public safety, and reducing homelessness. The City applied for and received a \$200,000 grant from the Center for Court Innovation and the Department of Justice to implement and administer the first Community Court in Florida. To continue our effort to ending homelessness, the City Commission approved funding to support a Food Repatriation Program, to address the repatriation of food from restaurants to homeless shelters and food pantries around the City that serve meals to neighbors. Additionally, over the last two years, Fort Lauderdale successfully administered a Rapid Rehousing Program that leveraged \$900,000 in state funding along with local resources to provide permanent housing for 498 of the most vulnerable homeless in our city, which included 115 families. We will continue to work with community partners to find permanent housing for those in need.

If you are a member of the business community and want to learn more about the Broward Business Council on Homelessness or the LEAP program, please call 954-462-4850 or visit www.United-WeEndHomelessness.org. Individuals, families and community organizations wishing to participate in collaborative efforts to end homelessness are encouraged to call 954-357-6101, or email AWayHome@Broward.org.

Together we will find a home for everyone in Fort Lauderdale. I encourage you to join us in this effort.

Fort Lauderdale Dockless Bike and Scooter Sharing

Dockless Mobility Program has arrived to Fort Lauderdale! This program allows users to rent bikes and electric scooters from almost anywhere. Please check out the Fort Lauderdale website for more information.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTARY: Lamar Fisher's DECEMBER 2018 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

In his December 2018 Newsletter, District 4 Broward Commissioner Lamar Fisher uses his inaugural message to deliver insight into his initial agenda on the County board. Fisher opens with a commitment to maintain County beaches and help fortify the region against the impacts of climate change, especially the tidal flooding that wreaks havoc in District 4 coastal communities; affirms an intention to help channel newly voter-approved surtax revenues into relieving traffic congestion and enhancing connectivity; laments a dearth of affordable housing that inflames a countywide cost burden rated worst in the nation; and applauds the newly formed Homelessness Collaborative in Broward County, which is planning realistic interim and permanent low-barrier housing solutions while improving underutilized support services. Not bad for an initial rollout.

FLORIDA AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

As population growth in Florida inflated property values, chronic high-end development juxtaposed with stagnating wages drove a demand for low-income housing by an increasingly underpaid workforce, including teachers, nurses, firefighters, law enforcement officers and scores of service sector occupations (i.e. retail trade, leisure and hospitality, educational and health services, etc.). Once a local workforce proves insufficient for a company's needs, it relocates – often to a lower cost-of-living metro area with better employee housing opportunities. Mirroring a problem long indigenous to regions where modest incomes are insufficient for survival – Florida's lack of affordable housing fueled a statewide workforce shortage that undermined local economies. Although one of the country's wealthiest States, Florida ranks 44th in the nation for availability of affordable housing.

In 1992, lawmakers raised the documentary stamp tax on deeds by ten cents per \$100 of the property's value (doubled to 20 cents in 1995) to fund the William E. Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust (named after a Department of Community Affairs secretary who had recently died in a plane crash). By leveraging private and federal funding, every dollar in the Trust yields \$4 to \$6 to help develop affordable housing for the workforce, the elderly and disabled. 70% of monies is allocated to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund (i.e. the SHIP program which funds housing programs in all 67 counties and larger cities) while 30% of monies goes to the State Housing Trust Fund for the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (i.e. the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program for affordable multifamily rental housing). SAIL and SHIP programs are flexible and can address homelessness, senior housing, and meet the changing needs of a moderate-income essential workforce.

In contrast with a popular misconception, investing in affordable housing preservation and development yields an enormous return (ROI) through job creation, revenue generation and economic stability. Its fiscal benefits outweigh the costs, according to housing economists. A 2014 Florida International University Affordable Housing Assessment and a 2015 economic impact analysis by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) both document how taxes and revenues generated by housing development far

exceed the state's infrastructure and service costs to support that development.

More specifically, every dollar appropriated by the Florida Legislature for the Sadowski trust fund between 2006 and 2016 resulted in \$9.50 of economic activity for the state, including the creation of 94,000 jobs and \$3 billion in new income for Floridians along with State and local government tax windfalls. Since household income saved on housing is invariably spent on food, healthcare, products and services, Florida businesses harvested \$12.5 billion in generated sales revenue.

FEDERAL & STATE SHELL GAMES

As reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, NYU Furman Center/CapitalOne, and the University of Florida's Shimberg Center, Broward County is the most cost-burdened metro area in the United States - the county has more people spending over half their monthly income on rent than anywhere else the entire country. Of the nearly one million Florida households that pay more than 50 percent of their incomes for housing, 127,382 live in Broward. When forced to commute between work and outlying affordable neighborhoods, the combined transportation and housing costs often chew through more than 70% of the household budget, leaving a pittance for food, healthcare, education, childcare and other necessities.

Why can't Broward County access the Sadowski Trust to address the nation's most egregious affordable housing vacuum? In short, most of the funds are annually stripped from the Trust. Almost every year after 2001, the Governor and lawmakers used the Trust as a slush fund, transferring dedicated resources to benefit powerful lobbies or quell issues marinating in media spin. Since 2001, the state has swept more than \$2 billion from the Trust into the general revenue account, where it plugged budget gaps, provided handouts and tax breaks to special interests and funded pork projects in the districts of high-profile lawmakers. Last year, lawmakers snatched \$182 million from the fund.

Commenting on the annual plundering of the State Trust Fund, newly elected District 93 Statehouse Representative (and former Broward County Commissioner) Chip LaMarca lamented "One thing I hear from a lot of folks in real estate and housing is that they wouldn't have supported Sadowski when they had the opportunity if they'd known this would have happened."

BROWARD VOTERS POINT THE WAY

Given how the State's affordable housing Trust has devolved into a fiscal squeeze toy - and Federal efforts to eliminate \$6 billion from HUD affordable housing programs - on November 6, 2018, the Broward electorate approved amending the Broward County Charter to enact a new Section 11.11, establishing the Broward County Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The Trust will be used to create and sustain affordable housing throughout Broward County for tenants and homeowners and increase workforce housing opportunities. While defining Affordable Housing as housing intended for very low to moderate income households, the measure specifies an Income Eligible Person/Family as having a total annual anticipated household income 140 percent of the median annual income (adjusted for family

size) for households within Broward County.

Funding sources include resources voluntarily contributed by participating municipalities or programs funded by the Trust; grants or donations; mandatory or voluntary payments made pursuant to development policies established by ordinance; savings from Expired Tax Increment Financing Payments to County Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs); and General Revenue appropriations annually budgeted to the Trust Fund by the County Commission (a proposed \$5 million allocated annually for 3 years).

Composed of state and county government officials, the public, top executives from the private and business sectors, the Coordinating Council of Broward (CCB) is one of the organizations committed to driving this effort. The CCB's primary goal is to ensure that Broward remains a home to its working people, currently classified as ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed). To counter the impacts of workforce emigration to more affordable job markets, Broward employers have unilaterally expressed an intention to support the Trust - with both political capital and corporate Benjamins.

PROGRESS OR PIPE DREAM

Of course, veteran Broward residents are understandably leery, given the County's checkered history of fiscal abuse by elected officials. Since its not inconceivable that mercenary Broward politicians and bureaucrats could take a page from State lawmakers and pillage the Trust, county commissioners are barred from using the funds for anything except affordable housing projects, appropriations do not lapse and Trust resources never revert to general revenues of the County. Coordinating Council of Broward Director Sandra Veszi Einhorn, who favors the Trust from an economic development perspective, likened it to "a lock box."

If that lock box isn't ripped off, and included oversight protocols are effectively managed, Trust revenues could help deliver a dividend trifecta - housing fixed-income seniors and the disabled, deterring the departure of a qualified workforce - and plumping profits for local businesses. If implemented in conjunction with a recently launched initiative to end homelessness, the plan could enable homeless families and individuals to abandon local encampments, get off the street and enhance prospects for a stable life. Whether the Trust fulfills its promise or proves another smoke and mirrors waste of resources will come out in the wash. More to come... Read Commissioner Lamar Fisher's December 2018 Newsletter elsewhere in this edition. - [editor]*

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- AUTO ACCIDENTS
- WRONGFUL DEATH
- SLIP & FALL
- WORKERS COMP.
- MEDICAL MALPRACTICE
- NURSING HOME NEGLECT



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JANUARY/FEB

SUN	MON	TUE	WED
		1 HAMILTON (Through 1/20) Broward Center for the Performing Arts Info.: ticketmaster.com 18th Annual Resolution 5K TY Park, Hollywood 5K Run/Walk: 9 a.m.; Kid's Dash: 9:45 a.m.; Youth Mile: 10 a.m. Info.: 954-461-5515	2
6 Diana Ross Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino 7 to 9 p.m. Info.: www.seminolehardrock- hollywood.com SunTrust Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-396-3622	7	8 BINGO (Jan - March) Galt Towers Social Room Info.: 954-563-7268	9 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063 Classical Concert Performer: Violist Marcus Thompson Hagen Park Community Center, 7 p.m. Info.: 954-390-2130
13 Rainbow 5K Run / Walk Shoppes of Wilton Manors 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. Info.: 954-463-9005 X 105 41st Annual Oshogatsu: A New Years Celebration Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 561-495-0233	14 Church Architecture Bonnet House Museum & Gardens 10 to 11:30 a.m. Info.: www.bonnethouse.org Palm Beach Business Expo Embassy Suites Hotel (Boca) 5 to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-838-9644	15 BINGO (Jan - March) Galt Towers Social Room Info.: 954-563-7268	16 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063 Ben Stein Broward Center for the Performing Arts Tix.: www.ticketmaster.com
20 Giro Bella Women's Bike Ride Snyder Park 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. Info.: 786-636-8192	21	22 BINGO (Jan - March) Galt Towers Social Room Info.: 954-563-7268 Palm Beach Condo & HOA Expo 2019 Palm Beach County Convention Center 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Info.: 952-881-5030	23 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063 Masquerade Ball LBTS Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events
27 Farmers Market El Prado Park 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events Dancing By The Sea The Beach Pavilion, LBTS 5 to 7 p.m. Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events	28 An Evening wqith VP Joe Biden Broward Center for the Performing Arts 7:30 to 9 p.m. Info.: www.ticketmaster.com	29 BINGO (Jan - March) Galt Towers Social Room Info.: 954-563-7268 Toni Braxton Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino 8 p.m. Info.: www.seminolehardrockholly- wood.com	30 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063 Fort Lauderdale Career Fair Marriott Fort Lauderdale North 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 877-561-5627

JAN 12: Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Drop-off, Mills Pond Park, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-828-8000
 JAN 12: Beach BonFire, Lake Worth Casino & Beach Complex, 6 to 9 p.m., Info.: www.lakeworthcra.org
 JAN 12: Sample-McDougald House 8th Annual Antique Car Show, Sample-McDougald House (450 NE 10th St., Pompano), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-298-0854
 JAN 12-13: 32nd Annual Boca Fest, The Town Center Mall in Boca, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 561-746-6615
 JAN 13: Jazz Picnic in the Park, Performer: Under the Lake, Ilene Lieberman Botanical Gardens in Lauderhill, 11 a.m. to 2: 30 p.m., Info.: 954-777-2042
 JAN 17-20: Miami Beach Jewelry & Watch Show, Indian Beach Park (4601 Collins Ave., Miami Beach), Info.: 561-822-5440
 JAN 19: Arlo Guthrie, Parker Playhouse, 8 p.m., Tix.: ticketmaster.com
 JAN 19: Cher: Here We Go Again Tour, BB&T Center, 8 p.m., Tix.: ticketmaster.com
 JAN 19-20: 29th Annual Nautical Flea Market 2019, Community Park in Pompano, Info.: 954-946-6419
 JAN 19-20: 30th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Festival of the Arts, East Atlantic Ave., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 561-746-6615
 JAN 26: Beach BonFire, Lake Worth Casino & Beach Complex, 6 to 9 p.m., Info.: www.lakeworthcra.org
 JAN 26-27: Deerfield Beach Festival of the Arts, Main Beach Parking Lot (49 SE 21st Ave., Deerfield Beach), 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 954-480-4429

ONE SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

THU

FRI

SAT

<p>3 Pet Playdate Day Camp Humane Society of Broward County 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Info.: cneff@hsbroward.com</p> <p>Art of Wine & Food Series: Wintertime Whites NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale 4 to 8 p.m. Info.: http://nsuartmuseum.org</p>	<p>4 Sunset Kayak Tour 600 East Las Olas Blvd Park & Ocean (3109 E sunrise Blvd) 4:30 to 6:15 p.m. Info.: 954-563-2900</p> <p>Lunch on the Lawn Mizner Park, Boca 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: www.myboca.us</p>	<p>5 Las Olas Art Fair Part I (Through 1/6) 600 East Las Olas Blvd 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 561-746-6615</p> <p>Beer Run 5K-ish Lauderdale Brewery & Tap Room 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: www.eventsprout.com/event/LauderAle</p>
<p>10 Miami Jewish Film Festival Opening Night Aventura Arts & Cultural Center 8 p.m. Info/Tix.: ticketmaster.com</p> <p>MARVEL UNIVERSE LIVE! (Through 1/13) BB&T Center Thur: 7 p.m.; Fri: 10:30 a.m., 7 p.m.; Sat: 11 a.m., 3 p.m., 7 p.m.; Sun: 1 p.m., 5 p.m. Info.: 866-248-8740</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 Sailfish Smack Down North of Pompano Beach Pier Pompano Beach Info.: joe@extremekayakfishing.com</p> <p>8th Annual Stone Crab & Seafood Festival Esplanade Park 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 954-468-1541, Ext. 208</p>
<p>17 Concerts Under the Stars Bonnet House 6:30 to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-703-2614</p> <p>G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.</p>	<p>18 South Florida Fair (Through 2/3) S Florida Fairgrounds, WPB Info.: 561-793-0333</p> <p>Art Deco Weekend (Through 1/20) Art Deco Historic District (Lummus Park: 1001 Ocean Drive), Miami Info.: 305-672-2014</p>	<p>19 Delta 5K Walk/Run for Health Oswald Park Info.: 561-793-0333 6 to 11:30 a.m. Info.: 954-593-7111</p> <p>JA World Uncorked! JA World Huizenga Center, Broward College (1130 Coconut Creek Blvd), Coconut Creek 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Info.: 954-979-7124</p>
<p>24 Gladys Knight Broward Center for the Performing Arts Tix.: www.ticketmaster.com</p> <p>Art Fort Lauderdale Waterfront Properties & Restaurants along Intracoastal Waterway Info.: 954-361-4998</p>	<p>25 Chocolate Festival (Through 1/27) Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Info.: 305-667-1651</p> <p>Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society Show (Through 1/27) War Memorial Auditorium 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 954-764-1239</p>	<p>26 South Florida Folk Festival (Through 1/27) Hugh Taylor Birch State Park Info.: SoFLFolkFest@gmail.com</p> <p>Vintage Motorcycle Show Frost Park, Dania Beach 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 954-830-8855</p>
<p>31 Penn & Teller Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino 8 p.m. Info.: www.seminole-hardrockhollywood.com</p> <p>Splendor in the Garden Luncheon & Fashion Show Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Info.: 305-667-1651</p>	<p>1 Shakespeare in the Park (Through 2/2) Romeo & Juliet ArtPark Amphitheater, Hollywood Info.: www.shakespearemiami.com</p>	<p>2 Community Health Fair ArtServe 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 561-779-1759</p> <p>South Florida Depression Glass Show (Through 2/3) Emma Lou Olsen Civic Center, Pompano Info.: 305-884-0335</p>

THE FUN CONTINUES !

FEBRUARY 5-10
Fort Lauderdale Major 2019
Fort Lauderdale Beach (1140 Seabreeze Blvd.)
Info.: 954-249-6979

FEBRUARY 8
LitLUNCH!
Mary N. Porter Riverview Ballroom
11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Info.: 954-357-7382

FEBRUARY 5-10
Run for Beer
Hollywood Brewing Company
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Info.: nate@breweryrunningseries.com

FEBRUARY 9-10
27th Annual Florida Renaissance Festival
Quiet Waters Park
10 a.m. Sundown
Info.: 954-771-7045

FEBRUARY 9-10
20th Annual South Florida Garlic Fest
John Prince Park, Lake Worth
Info.: 561-274-4663

FEBRUARY 10
Andy's 17th Annual Family Pasta Dinner
Signature Grand, Davie
4 to 7 p.m.
Info.: 754-224-3132

FEBRUARY 23-24
Street Painting Festival
Downtown Lake Worth
10 a.m.
Info.: www.streetpaintingfestivalinc.org

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF EVENTS, GO TO THE CALENDAR AT WWW.GALTMILE.COM

- First Saturday of Every Month:** Beach Cleanup, Commercial Blvd. & the Beach LBTS (Meet at Pavilion), 9 to 9:30 a.m., Info.: 954-776-1000
- First Saturday of Every Month:** North Beach Art Walk, 3280 NE 32nd St, 7 to 11 p.m., Info.: 954-537-3370
- Second Saturday of Every Month:** Beach Sweep, Fort Lauderdale Beach Hub, 300 S. Fort Lauderdale Beach Blvd., 7 to 11 a.m., Info.: 954-709-3197
- Second Saturday of Every Month:** Burlock Coast Farmer's Market, Burlock Coast at the The Ritz-Carlton, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Info.: myfortlauderdalebeach.com
- Second Tuesday of Every Month:** Orchid Greenhouse Tours, Bonnet House, 11 a.m. to Noon, Info.: 954-703-2606
- Mondays:** Food Trucks at ArtsPark, 5:30 to 10 p.m., Youngs Circle in Hollywood
- Fridays (through May):** Friday Night Music, El Mar Drive between Village Grille/Pump and 101 Ocean, 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., Info.: www.lbtsevents.com
- Sundays:** Tour-the River Ghost Tour, Stranahan House & Water Taxi, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-524-4736
- Sundays:** Las Olas Sunday Market, 333 East Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave., 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-426-8436
- Sundays (through May):** Farmer's Market at El Prado Park, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 561-714-2745
- Saturdays:** Saturday Night Under the South Florida Stars, Fox Astronomical Observatory at Markham Park, Sunset to Midnight, Info.: 954-384-0442
- Tuesday & Thursdays (Through April):** Seaside Yoga and Meditation, El Prado Park, 7 to 8 a.m., Info.: 954-850-7361 (weather permitting)

BROWARD COMMISSIONER

LAMAR FISHER

DECEMBER 2018 UPDATE



tion of our beaches while also focus on finding sensible solutions for the impacts of climate change and sea level rise in our region.

I'm looking forward to working collaboratively with the counties and cities in the region in the preparation for the effects of climate change. Making sure we focus on sea level rise, flooding issues and any economic and social disruptions these changes might bring to our community.

Transportation Surtax

On November 6, 2018 Broward County voters approved a 30-year 1% local option sales tax which will fund countywide transportation system improvements. These improvements will create connectivity, relieve traffic congestions, improve transit services, and expand the availability of multimodal transportation. The plan provides for 476 road, traffic, signal, bridge, technology and safety improvements, more than 700 city-requested transportation improvements, full funding for existing Community Shuttles and Paratransit, and a more reliable, responsive/accessible local transit system. Most importantly, this collaborative plan prioritizes connectivity and congestion relief by creating a dedicated transportation-specific funding, with an independent Oversight Committee.

I look forward to working with the County Commission, the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization and each of the 8 municipalities in District 4 to target our biggest traffic problems and improve our transportation system.

Affordable Housing

Broward County is amid an affordable housing crisis. There is a current demand for over 100,000 affordable units according to a study by Florida International University with over 65,000 units for Low Income Families. According to the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, Broward County is the most cost burdened metro area in the nation. Currently, standard housing costs plus transportation costs is 45% of a household income in the nation, unfortunately, Broward County has the highest housing plus transportation costs in the nation at over 70% of a household income! These statistics are astronomical, and we must find a way to provide affordable housing options for our residents. I will work on finding further solutions for this crisis and continue to support County strategies that provide residents options for affordable housing.

Dear Residents,

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your District 4 Commissioner. It is an honor and privilege to have been elected to be your voice and to represent you, the citizens of our coastal communities from Deerfield Beach to Fort Lauderdale. As your County Commissioner I look forward to continuing to improve resident's quality of life by focusing on several key issues in our community. I will focus on improving our environment, alleviating traffic congestion and transportation issues, the affordable housing crises in Broward County and finding sound solutions for homelessness. As a fourth-generation resident of Broward County, I have a deep connection with our community and I'm dedicated to serve the residents of District 4 and help you make a better Broward!

Our Environment

As your District 4 County Commissioner, I represent nearly 3 quarters of Broward County's 24 miles of sandy beaches. Our beaches are a valuable resource and wonderful tourist's attraction providing for our local economy. I will advocate for the protec-

Continued on page 16





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Lamar...Continued

Homelessness

Our community is also facing the challenges of addressing homelessness. It is time we provide all the assistance necessary for individuals experiencing homelessness, which may include providing permanent housing opportunities and the right level of service to ensure the individual can maintain stability and prosper. Recently, a public-private sector partner collaborative with representatives from more than 40 agencies and organizations was established in May 2018 to formulate a thorough, thoughtful and detailed plan of action to end homelessness, beginning with local encampments. While this plan focuses on one area of our community, I'm looking forward to being able to provide solutions for all 8 cities in District 4.

The Resident's Guide to Government provides a convenient resource to help people stay connected to their local government. It includes contact information for County officials and Federal, State and local agencies. Visitors can subscribe to E-news and social media sites. Please sign up at www.Broward.org/District4 to receive email updates from our office. If there is anything that we can do to assist you with your vision for a better Broward, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 954-357-7004 or by email at LFisher@broward.org.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your County Commissioner.

Lamar P. Fisher
County Commissioner
District 4

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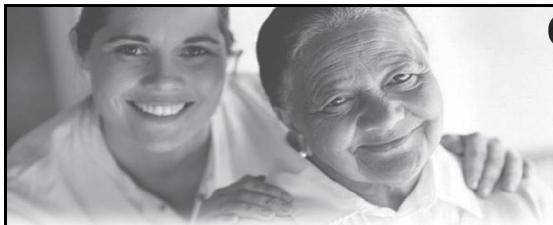
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